(a) whether it is proposed to give a facelift to the world class monument, the Taj Mahal;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the peripheral area to the fort would also be given facelift to facilitate comfortable and easy approach to the monuments;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) what is the action plan of the Centre to give similar facelift to the world-renowned monuments in Orissa to boost tourism in the State?

THE MINISTER OF CULTURE (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Conservation and preservation in work of protected monuments including World Heritage Sites is a continuous process and is taken up depending upon the need of the monument and availability of resources. Cleaning of the marble surfaces of the Taj Mahal by use of clay pack method has been taken up.

(c) and (d) The development of peripheral area of the Taj Mahal is the responsibility of local authorities. For improvement of approach to the monument, ITDC has taken up a project for Revitalization and Visitor Management for Taj Mahal Vicinity Area to be implemented by the CPWD.

(e) Conservation, preservation and environmental development work of the monuments is attended to as per the annual conservation programme. The monuments are in good state of preservation. The total expenditure on conservation of monuments in Orissa, including the Sun Temple, Konark (World Heritage Site) and major monuments in Puri and Bhubaneswar in the last financial year (2007-08) is Rs. 278.29 lakhs.

Effects of inflation on people living Below Poverty Line

†3741. SHRI LALIT KISHORE CHATURVEDI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that inflation is on the rise in the country and prices of goods used by common man have increased 15 to 20 per cent alongwith rise in inflation during last one year;

(b) whether such people whose annual income is very close to Below Poverty Line (BPL) have not come Below Poverty Line (BPL) as a result of this; and

(c) if so, the percentage of people affected by this?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) to (c) The WPI based average annual inflation for all commodities and for 30 essential commodities in 2007-08 was 4.5 per cent and 2.2 per cent respectively. The thirty 'essential' commodities include 16 primary articles, 12 manufactured products and 2 items from the fuel group, which have a weight of 17.63 per cent in the WPI and form a significant part of the consumption basket of common man. Out of these 30 essential commodities, only 4 commodities recorded year-on-year inflation of more than 15 per cent as indicated in the Statement (*See* below).

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Statement

Grouping of Essential Items according to price rise

a. Inflation>15%	Onions, Masur, Groundnut Oil Rape & Mustard Oil
b. Inflation 5%—15%	Arhar, Jowar, Potatoes, Milk, Rice, Hydrogenated vanaspati, Mutton, Household laundry soap
c. Inflation<5%	Wheat, Atta, Bajra, Chillies (Dry), Coking coal, Safety Matches
d. Inflation 0%	Kerosene, Long cloth/sheeting, Dhoties, saris & voils
e. Negative Inflation	Gram, Salt, Moong, Urad, Tea, Fish-Inland, coconut-oil, Gur, Sugar

Containment of inflation remains high on the agenda of the Government. Anti-inflationary policies of the government include strict fiscal discipline, rationalization of duties of essential items, effective supply-demand management of essential commodities through liberal tariff and trade policies, and procurement through public sector agencies. Central Issue Price of wheat and rice under targeted public distribution system has been kept stable since July 2002 to provide relief to the BPL and APL families.

Credit flow to corporate sector

3742. SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that his Ministry has asked banks to step up credit flow to specific corporate sector; and

(b) if so, whether this constitutes direct lending which would potentially have negative financial impact on the banks in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI PAWAN KUMAR BANSAL): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Additional quantum of pension for old aged pensioners

3743. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Sixth Central Pay Commission has recommended 20 per cent additional quantum of pension to Central Government old pensioners who would be attaining the age of 80 years;

(b) if so, whether Government proposes to extend this benefit of 20 per cent basic pension to its present pensioners who have attained the age of 75 years because of health and other financial problems being faced by them; and

(c) if so, what is the reaction of Government thereto and the date from which it would become effective?